

Customs Modernization

April 2002 Status Update for Oversight Organizations

Modernization at-a-Glance

Timeline

June 4-6: Trade Support
Network Meeting, Fairlakes,
VA.

Congratulations to Federal 100 Award Winners!

CMO Executive Director, Charles R. Armstrong was among this year's top executives from government, industry, and academia who had the greatest impact on the government information systems community in 2001. Armstrong received his award March 12 at Federal Computer Week's 13th annual Federal 100 Awards at the Ritz Carlton in Tysons Corner, Va. An independent panel of judges chose Armstrong because of the difference he made in the way Customs develops, acquires, and manages information technology. Also receiving Federal 100 Awards were S. W. Hall, Assistant Commissioner, Office of Information and Technology (OIT), and Mickey Kelley, Chief, Network Engineering Branch, Infrastructure Services Division, OIT.

Completion of ACE Requirements Kicks Off the Modernization Program

The Customs Modernization Office (CMO) has successfully completed planning and definition of user requirements for the first part of the Automated Commercial Environment (ACE). This effort represents a crucial planning step in the effort to modernize Customs automated trade system.

To ensure ACE functionality would encompass all operational working levels, Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) were recruited from within Customs and other participating government agencies to assist in developing requirements. SME involvement is an essential element in defining the future of ACE. "We don't want to lose sight of who we are developing for—people in the field. We must provide them with the tools they need to do their job," said Sharon Mazur, Executive Lead for Task Order 3 (TO3) ACE Requirements and Planning task.

A task order is a specific piece of work needed to design and build the ACE system. The requirements defined in TO3 define what the ACE system needs to do to support Customs mission. These requirements also help establish a baseline for when and how new capabilities will be implemented. TO3 was an ambitious effort and set high standards for the entire modernization program.

"With this task completed, the CMO has a roadmap for complete production of ACE," said Jim Gleason, Government Task Coordinator for TO3.

During TO3, an analysis of how Customs currently operates was identified and potential improved processes were developed. The processes were then validated with focus groups comprised of the SMEs and government and trade representatives. In addition to laying the groundwork for the development of ACE, TO3 work also enabled those involved to develop the key working relationships that will help sustain the project. The benefits of TO3 will start to be seen with the initial deployment of capabilities to the field in October 2002.

"Our experience in task order 3 demonstrated how successful we can be when we effectively collaborate and communicate. We accomplished what we set out to do plus more."

*Sharon Mazur
Executive Lead for Task Order 3
Customs Modernization Office*

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Customs Modernization:
New World, New Tools